

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I am sure our colleagues will no doubt remember this very famous photograph. This is the photograph where Speaker GINGRICH and President Clinton shook hands on July 11, 1995, and pledged to this Nation that they would reform the campaign finance system under which we govern.

Mr. Speaker, since that time, President Clinton in the State of the Union asked the House of Representatives to pass campaign finance reform by July 4. The House of Representatives stonewalled.

Yesterday, President Clinton again asked the House and vowed he would fight for campaign finance reform, and yet we have heard nothing from Speaker GINGRICH. In fact, we have heard nothing from Speaker GINGRICH on this subject, except that he believes we need more money in campaigns and not less money. But he will not schedule campaign finance reform for the House. He will not lead an effort to reform this system. He has continued to stonewall this.

Mr. Speaker, we need more than this from the Speaker of the House of Representatives. The people's House and the people deserve campaign finance reform. Mr. Speaker, I say to Speaker GINGRICH, "Live up to your pledge. Live up to your handshake. Give the people the reform we need."

SCHOOL CHOICE IS THE ANSWER

(Mr. BOB SCHAFFER of Colorado asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BOB SCHAFFER of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, if we were a manufacturer that produced an inferior product, what would we think if we had to face real competition for the first time? My guess is that we would feel the same as those government-owned schools which are absolutely terrified by school choice.

Mr. Speaker, they are terrified by school choice because they know that kids whose parents do not have the money to move or to send their kids to a private school have no choice but to send their kids to another government school where they have to pass through metal detectors, where there is no order in the classroom, and where the idea of standards and accountability leave them lagging behind their international peers.

Government-owned schools have a complete monopoly, plain and simple, and all monopolies fear competition. I can 100 percent guarantee an inferior product of any human endeavor if producers are shielded from competition, if producers are not forced to innovate and improve.

Mr. Speaker, just look at the Communist legacy in every single case, especially education. The bureaucrats who just love their government-owned schools and want to protect their monopoly will do so at just about any

cost, regardless of whether kids have to receive an inferior education and blighted futures.

Mr. Speaker, it is wrong and I have lost patience with those who refuse to do best for the kids. School choice is the answer.

SUPPORT PUBLIC EDUCATION

(Ms. DELAURO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, what are government-owned schools? Public education. And public education in this great Nation of ours has always been the great equalizer, for it is in fact public education that affords the child of a garment worker, like myself, the same opportunities as the children of university professors, political figures, and business leaders.

Mr. Speaker, my colleagues on the other side of the aisle would work as hard as they can to see the destruction of public education in this country. Today on this floor they will propose to cut Goals 2000, cut Whole School Reform, cut Safe and Drug Free Schools, vital initiatives that in fact, yes, have proven to work.

That is why Democrats are fighting against these Republican efforts. These initiatives help to make our schools safer. They get parents more involved in education. They help school districts to buy new textbooks and train teachers, and they help our students to meet the high standards to ensure that they are learning the basics in reading and mathematics and writing.

Mr. Speaker, that is the direction that we should be going in. I urge my colleagues to support and strengthen fundamental school reform and support our public education system.

EDUCATION REFORM MUST BE A TOP PRIORITY

(Mr. WELDON of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WELDON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, Alexis de Toqueville wrote in his famous work, "Democracy in America" that, "In America, there cannot be enough of knowledge, for all knowledge benefits those who possess it and those who do not."

Now, Alexis de Toqueville is quoted all the time, but there is a very good reason for it. He is often right on the mark, so insightful, and so remarkable in his judgment. And de Toqueville's commentary here on the value of knowledge, about how education is important to everyone, is an example of his wisdom.

Mr. Speaker, education is an issue that is important to those with children and those without. If a generation of American schoolchildren is receiving an inferior education, that is a serious problem of concern to us all.

Of course, the reality is that some of our Nation's schools are excellent, some undistinguished and some simply a disgrace. But it is the general trend toward mediocrity, the systematic dumbing down of curricula, textbooks, and standards that I find more alarming.

Mr. Speaker, I know that millions of parents agree, and that is why education reform must be a top priority.

REPUBLICANS SHOULD JOIN WITH DEMOCRATS TO ADDRESS CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

(Mr. TIERNEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. TIERNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise this morning just to speak briefly about campaign finance reform and the need for this House to address that issue before we go home this fall.

Mr. Speaker, whatever business we do in this House requires that the American people have some faith and confidence in what we do and what action we take. Credibility is something that is lacking as long as the American public senses that we do not have the will to address the issue that is foremost on their minds, underlying all of the other issues which we will debate and are to debate, and that is whether or not we can do away with the perception that money, soft money or hard money, has way too much influence in the way that business is conducted in this House.

Mr. Speaker, the Republicans want to say that this is the responsibility of somebody else, but I tell my colleagues that it was Democrats in the 105th, 102d, and 103d Congresses that brought this issue to the forefront. It was President Bush that vetoed campaign finance reform when it passed, and it was the Senate, led by the Republicans, that stopped it.

Mr. Speaker, there are some Republicans in the House that now want to move forward on this issue. But if they had the majority on their side, and the Republicans are the majority, we would be moving forward on that issue.

So, Mr. Speaker, the responsibility lies with the Republican side of the House to join with the Democrats and deal with the issue of campaign finance reform.

CONGRESS SHOULD EMPOWER PARENTS, NOT BUREAUCRATS

(Mr. ROGAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ROGAN. Mr. Speaker, in today's newspaper we learned that the Journal of the American Medical Association is publishing a national study that found when teenagers feel connected to their parents and to their schools, they are less likely to suffer emotional distress, consider suicide, engage in violence, smoke, drink, use drugs, or have early sex.

It may surprise some of our friends on the other side of the aisle who really believe that schools should be run by Washington bureaucrats. Perhaps they believe these favorable findings are achieved only when children feel connected to big government. The truth is, the connection must be to parents and to good schools, not to Washington.

Mr. Speaker, we cannot legislate good parents, but we in Congress can legislate better schools. The way to make schools better is to end the day of Washington bureaucrats and redtape running our local schools. Let us empower parents and teachers and local school districts instead of bureaucrats thousands of miles from the classroom. That would be the greatest legacy we could give to both public education and to our children's future.

CONGRESS SHOULD TAKE CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM OUT OF LIMBO

(Ms. HOOLEY of Oregon asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. HOOLEY of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, our finance system, campaign finance system is riddled with loopholes. Large corporate contributions are routinely spent on Federal elections despite legislation which is intended to limit them.

Mr. Speaker, the leverage these big corporate dollars have on the political process limits the ability of the average citizen to make his or her voice heard in the political process.

It is time for Congress to take campaign finance reform legislation out of limbo and pass substantive reform. With the introduction of a bill crafted by a bipartisan freshman task force, we have a good legislative vehicle to make this happen.

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This legislation would take an even-handed step toward reforming the system. It bans soft money contributions, requires full disclosure of independent expenditure campaigns, and tightens up candidate reporting guidelines.

I urge my colleagues to join me in calling for an end to the stalemate on campaign finance reform. Let us bring this to the floor for debate and for a vote.

EDUCATION

(Mr. GIBBONS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. Speaker, if polled my guess is that each and every Member of this body, regardless of their political philosophy or party affiliation, will claim to be deeply concerned about education. Well, the President's latest national education standards proposal shows that my liberal colleagues care about education all right, the Department of Education.

As though the current 760 Federal education programs are not enough, they want to spend millions more in taxpayer dollars to create yet another bureaucratic program to impose the will of Washington on each and every school district in America. I would urge my liberal colleagues to join those of us who are fighting to send the Federal funding where it will have the greatest effect, to the teachers and students and classrooms of this country.

Mr. Speaker, enough is enough. Education dollars should be spent educating our children, not lining the pockets of Federal bureaucrats.

MORE ON EDUCATION

(Mr. WEYGAND asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WEYGAND. Mr. Speaker, I want to address the House this morning for the purposes of talking about perhaps the most important issue I think in all of our districts. That is education.

Like many of my colleagues, I have roundtables in my district. I talk to the consumers of education, students, and parents. One of the most important things is the emerging use of technology in our schools and by our students. Unfortunately, many of our schools, while they may have great computerized systems, they do not have teachers who are qualified to teach those systems. The use of technology is often better handled by our students than by our teachers.

We need to provide the kind of professional training that is necessary for these teachers to better teach our children this technology. As you know, there is the HHS-Education bill before us. Over \$75 million of that bill will go toward professional development, some of which will go just for emerging technology. We need to pass this bill today because, quite frankly, education is for all children, not children of the elite; it is not just for the wealthy. It is education for all children. The future of our children is in this technology. Please pass this bill today.

CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

(Mr. BRADY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BRADY. Mr. Speaker, it is sad that some Members of Congress this fall are using campaign finance reform as a shield to divert attention from ethical problems in the White House. They make a mockery of an important issue to me and to many of the families in my district and in this country.

As a Republican, my support for restoring some common sense to our campaigns and our financing is based on the belief that in America if you work hard, you can be anything you want to be, including serving in Congress.

I want to help restore some respect and some credibility to Congress, because most people do not think we do the right things for the right reasons. I want hard-working citizens in every community to raise their hand to run for public office, but few do because they cannot afford a million dollars or cannot imagine how they would raise it. We pay a stiff price for this never ending search for the next contribution. It is like a drug, the more we have, the more we need, the more we want, and we can never reach our full potential as a country until we shake this financial monkey from our backs.

Let us begin a thoughtful debate for the right reasons.

BIPARTISAN CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

(Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Mr. Speaker, beginning with our first weeks of orientation, I believed this freshman class was a class that could work together. We wanted to talk together about the different points of why we ran.

I have to say, working with my freshman class, one of the things that we both agreed on was campaign finance reform.

Mr. Speaker, we have to do campaign finance reform. I do not want to waste my time trying to raise money. I want to do the people's work. We are not in the majority here. There are a number of freshman Republicans and Democrats who want to bring a bill on to the floor for campaign finance reform. Please, allow this to happen now so that we can have faith in the American people and they can have faith in us. Mr. Speaker, it is time to do it now.

CAUGHT WITH THEIR HANDS IN THE COOKIE JAR

(Mr. WHITFIELD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, President Clinton and Vice President GORE got their hands caught in the cookie jar. If they did not violate Federal campaign laws, they came as close to wholesale violations as any Presidential campaign in the history of America.

Now that the President cannot seek reelection, he has made campaign finance reform a primary goal. Labeling efforts to change finance laws as reform does not mean it will be better.

In fact, most campaign finance reform proposals would make our system worse. We spend more money advertising Coca-Cola, beer, pizza, and washing detergent than we do on political campaigns in Federal offices. Political action committees have brought people into the political system, individuals voluntarily contributing money. We